

Resource Number: 5BL921
Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY
Cultural Resource Re-evaluation Form

OAHP1405
Rev. 9/98

1. Resource Number: 5BL921 2. Temp. Resource Number: 157508435012
2A. Address: 633 LaFarge Avenue, Louisville, CO 80027
Previous address prior to 1939: 130 LaFarge, 140 LaFarge, 146 LaFarge. Louisville addresses were changed in 1939. LaFarge is sometimes spelled La Farge. Alternate addresses may be 633 La Farge, 130 La Farge, 140 La Farge, and 146 La Farge.

3. Attachments
(check as many as apply)
☒ Photographs
☒ Site sketch map
☒ U.S.G.S. map photocopy
☐ Other _____
☐ Other _____

4. Official determination
(OAHP USE ONLY)
☐ Determined Eligible
☐ Determined Not Eligible
☐ Need Data
☐ Nominated
☐ Listed
☐ Contributing to N.R. District
☐ Not Contributing to N.R. Dist

5. Resource Name: Historic Name: Stecker / Kerr/ Brennan House
Current Name: McWilliams House

6. Purpose of this current site visit (check as many as apply)

- ☐ Site is within a current project area
☒ Resurvey
☒ Update of previous site form(s)
☐ Surface collection
☐ Testing to determine eligibility
☐ Excavation
☐ Other _____

Describe This property is within the Jefferson Place Subdivision in Louisville, which is being evaluated for historic district potential in 2010 – 2011. This resurvey is part of the historic district evaluation process.



7. Previous Recordings: Architectural Inventory Form 2000, as part of "Old Town" Louisville Historical Building Survey by Carl McWilliams of Cultural Resource Historians. Historic Building Inventory Record 1985 by S. Mehls, C. Mehls of Western Historical Studies.
8. Changes or Additions to Previous Descriptions:

Construction History:

Louisville contractor Herman H. Fischer constructed the house at some time between 1900 and 1908. A barn, southwest of the house, was built shortly thereafter, but removed in 2010 along with a small tool shed that was located east of the barn. A hipped-roof rear porch addition on the west side predates 1950.

In 2000, the porch, deck and porch foundation were replaced. The porch roof was retained, supported by new posts designed to match the scrollwork brackets on the house. The scrollwork brackets are not original, having been added at some time between 1950 and 2000. In 2001, a window on the south wall was removed and replaced with a pair of French doors painted green, with a clear transom light above, leading to a wood deck.

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012

A small shed has been added since 2000. This is a small structure with a front gable roof covered with green asphalt shingles. The exterior is clad with vertical composition siding painted dark green with burgundy trim. There is one swinging door facing north and a pair of hopper windows on the east side.

Since the 2000 survey, the exterior siding has been painted dark green with dark burgundy and white trim. The main entry door is no longer painted but has a dark stain finish.

Landscape or special setting description: Jefferson Place Subdivision is a historic residential neighborhood adjacent to downtown Louisville. The subdivision is laid out on a standard urban grid of narrow, deep lots with rear alleys. Houses are built to a fairly consistent setback line along the streets with small front lawns, deep rear yards and mature landscaping. Small, carefully maintained single-family residences predominate. Most of the houses are wood framed, one or one and one-half stories in height, featuring white or light-colored horizontal wood or steel siding, gabled or hipped asphalt shingled roofs and front porches. While many of the houses have been modified over the years, the historic character-defining features of the neighborhood have generally been preserved.

633 LaFarge is consistent with these patterns, although the house is currently painted a dark color. It blends well with the scale and character of the neighborhood.

9. Changes in Condition: None.

10. Changes to Location or Size Information: None.

11. Changes in Ownership: Same ownership as 2000 inventory form.

12. Other Changes, Additions, or Observations:

Further research has yielded new information about the history of 633 La Farge.

This property has a common history with the properties at 722 Pine Street (5BL11317) and 720 Pine Street (5BL11316) located just to the west. All three properties have been in the same family for over 100 years, and for 633 La Farge, the ownership by one family has continued for nearly 130 years. Part of the significance of the history of these properties is that they reflect the early settlement of Louisville by numerous German-speaking immigrants.

These properties have made up more or less a family compound, with different family members living in different houses; at different times, the houses were also rented out.

It has been determined that Joseph and Agatha Stecker (or Stecher, or Stacher) came to the United States from Austria in 1881, according to their own reporting for the federal census. A naturalization record for Joseph Stecker that was summarized in Boulder Genealogical Quarterly, February 1994 (the record of which appears at www.Ancestry.com) indicates that Joseph came to the United States in 1882.

The Stecker family first acquired at least Lot 1 of Block 7 in 1882. (It is not clear from the online County property records whether this transaction also included Lots 2 and 3, but no separate warranty deed covering these lots was located.) The 1885 Colorado state census shows the "Stecher" family living in Louisville. Boulder County property records indicate that the Steckers acquired Lot 5, which constitutes 720 Pine, in 1889. It appears that they acquired 722 Pine, which is Lot 4, in 1909 (although this warranty deed was not recorded until 1932).

The 1948 Boulder County Assessor card for this house gives the date of construction as 1900. The Architectural Inventory Form for the Colorado Cultural Resource Survey that was completed in 2000 for 633 La Farge concluded that the house was contracted for in 1898 and completed in circa 1900. Looking at the Sanborn maps for 1893 and 1900, a one story structure can be seen in a slightly different location on this corner, and it is not until the 1908 Sanborn map that there appears a 1 ½ story house in the same location as the current structure. It can therefore be concluded that the likely time of construction was between 1900 and 1908. The house also appears in the approximate correct location on the 1909 Drumm's Wall Map of Louisville, but it seems to be only on Lot 1, not on both Lots 1 and 2, as the 1908 Sanborn map would indicate.

Joseph and Agatha Stecker had five children, of whom only one, Annie, lived to adulthood. Two sons died in the 1890s in Louisville and are buried at Sacred Heart of Mary Cemetery (located between Louisville and Boulder), as are their parents, Joseph and Agatha.

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012

Louisville directories first show a record for Joe “Sticker,” a miner, in 1892. By 1896, he was both a miner and a dairyman. According to a written history prepared by the family, the Steckers kept cows at 633 La Farge “and sold milk, delivered in 5-pound lard pails.” Agatha carried on their dairy business even after the death of Joe in 1904; the 1906 directory shows her still operating the dairy.

The 1904 Louisville directory shows Agatha Stecker, a widow, living at La Farge and Pine with her daughter, Annie. Agatha continued living at 633 La Farge for several more years. However, by the time of the 1916 directory, Agatha had moved next door to 722 Pine (then called 410 Pine). Agatha conveyed her ownership to these lots to her daughter, Annie, in 1919. It appears that Agatha continued to live at 722 Pine until near the time of her death in 1931.

At the time that Agatha moved to 722 Pine, her daughter, Annie, continued to occupy 633 La Farge, now with her husband, Robert Kerr, whom she married in 1909. Robert Kerr was born in Colorado in 1879 of an Irish born father and Canadian born mother. According to the family’s written history, this Kerr family came to Louisville in 1900. Annie and Robert Kerr raised their daughters, Alma and Bertha, at 633 La Farge with Agatha Stecker living next door at 722 Pine.

In Louisville directories, the former address of 633 La Farge is most often given as 146 and 140 La Farge, although 130 La Farge is also given as an address for this residence.

Annie Stecker Kerr passed away in 1931 and Robert Kerr passed away in 1937. Their daughter, Alma, married Floyd Brennan; their daughter, Bertha, moved to California. In 1953, Bertha conveyed her interest in the family properties to her sister, Alma.

Louisville directories show that Alma and Floyd Brennan resided at 722 Pine, where Alma’s grandmother Agatha Stecker had lived, in the 1950s. This is shown in the directories for 1955 through 1960.

For a period of time, the house at 633 La Farge was rented out by Alma and Floyd Brennan. For the years of 1953 through 1959, for example, Francis and Kathleen Kennedy are listed in Louisville directories as residing at 633 La Farge. Francis was a technician for RCA and Kathleen worked as a waitress at Louisville’s Blue Parrot Café.

By 1966, Alma and Floyd Brennan were residing at 633 La Farge. Floyd Brennan worked for thirty-five years as a labor foreman with a construction company and passed away in 1984. Alma Brennan passed away in 1999.

Today, descendants of the Stecker/Kerr/Brennan family continue to own the three properties of 633 La Farge, 722 Pine, and 720 Pine.

Sources of Information

Boulder County “Real Estate Appraisal Card – Urban Master” on file at the Carnegie Branch Library for Local History in Boulder, Colorado.

Boulder County Clerk & Recorder’s Office and Assessor’s Office public records, accessed through <http://recorder.bouldercounty.org>.

Directories of Louisville residents and businesses on file at the Louisville Historical Museum.

Census records and other records accessed through www.ancestry.com.

Drumm’s Wall Map of Louisville, Colorado, 1909

Sanborn Insurance Maps for Louisville, Colorado, 1893, 1900, and 1908

Green Mountain Cemetery Index to Interment Books, 1904-1925, Boulder Genealogical Society, 2006.

Sacred Heart of Mary Cemetery, Boulder County, records of burials, accessed through www.findagrave.com.

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012

Archival materials on file at the Louisville Historical Museum, including: Brennan, Alma Kerr. "Stecker-Kerr-Brennan-McWilliams: A Short History of Five Generations of Louisville People, 1870-1988."

13. National Register Eligibility Assessment:

Eligible ☐ Not eligible ☒ Need data ☐

Explain: This house is associated with the historic development of Louisville as one of the early twentieth-century homes in Louisville's first residential subdivision, Jefferson Place. Although Jefferson Place was platted in 1880, little housing construction occurred until the early 1900s. It is significant for its architecture, as a good example of a Late Victorian style house. However, recent modifications to the front porch and south side window opening impact integrity of design and materials to the extent that the property is not individually eligible to the National Register. The building is significant for its association with European (Austrian) immigrant coal-mining families who flocked to Colorado's coal mining communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in search of economic opportunities they could not find in their own countries. It is especially significant because it has been owned by a single family throughout its existence, up to the present day. The association with Austrian coal-mining immigrants is important, but not sufficiently significant for the property to be eligible to the National Register.

13A. Colorado State Register and Louisville Local Landmark: Eligible ☒

This property is individually eligible for the State Register under Criterion C for architecture as a good example of a Late Victorian style house (period of significance 1900-08). The property is eligible as a Louisville Landmark for architecture, and also because it is associated with the historic development of Louisville as one of the early twentieth-century homes in Louisville's first residential subdivision, Jefferson Place. Although Jefferson Place was platted in 1880, little housing construction occurred until the early 1900s. The building is significant for its association with European (Austrian) immigrant coal-mining families who flocked to Colorado's coal mining communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in search of economic opportunities they could not find in their own countries. It is especially significant because it has been owned by a single family throughout its existence, up to the present day.

13B. Historic District Potential: This building is contributing to a Jefferson Place State Register or local historic district, and contributing to a potential Jefferson Place National Register historic district.

There is also potential for a small State Register and local historic district comprised of this building along with the associated adjacent houses at 722 Pine Street (5BL11317) and 720 Pine Street (5BL11316) located just to the west. All three properties have been in the same family for over 100 years, and for 633 La Farge, the ownership by one family has continued for nearly 130 years. Part of the significance of the history of these properties is that they reflect the early settlement of Louisville by numerous German-speaking immigrants. This potential small State and local historic district is significant under Criterion A, Ethnic Heritage, European, but needs data to establish what ethnic or cultural traditions are significant as a result of the family's immigration to Louisville.

Discuss: This building is being recorded as part of a 2010-2011 intensive-level historical and architectural survey of Jefferson Place, Louisville's first residential subdivision, platted in 1880. The purpose of the survey is to determine if there is potential for National Register, State Register or local historic districts. Jefferson Place is eligible as a State Register historic district under Criterion A, Ethnic Heritage, European, for its association with European immigrants who first lived here and whose descendants continued to live here for over fifty years. The period of significance for the State Register historic district is 1881 – 1980. Jefferson Place is potentially eligible as a National Register historic district under Criterion A, Ethnic Heritage, European. However it needs data to determine dates of some modifications, and to more definitely establish the significant impacts of various European ethnic groups on the local culture of Louisville. The period of significance of a National Register district is 1881 – 1963. Jefferson Place is eligible as a local Louisville historic district under local Criterion B, Social, as it exemplifies the cultural and social heritage of the community.

European immigrant families flocked to Colorado coal mining communities, including Louisville, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in search of economic opportunities they could not find in their own countries. Louisville's Welch Coal Mine, along with other mines in the area, recruited skilled workers from western Europe. In the early years before 1900, most of the miners who lived in Jefferson Place came from English-speaking countries.

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012

Immigrants from England brought a strong tradition and expertise in coal mining. The English are widely credited with developing the techniques of coal mining that were used locally, and they taught these techniques to other miners. The British mining culture was instilled in the early Colorado coal mines. English immigrants also brought expertise in other necessary skills such as blacksmithing and chain forging.

Later Jefferson Place residents arrived from Italy, France, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, and Slovenia, among other places. The Italians eventually became the largest single ethnic group in Jefferson Place and in Louisville as a whole. About one-third of the houses in Jefferson Place were owned and occupied by Italian immigrants. Italian immigrants left their mark on Louisville in the food and beverage industries. To the present day, downtown Louisville is known throughout the Front Range for its tradition of Italian restaurants. The impacts of the heritage and customs of the other European ethnic groups could be significant, but are not well documented and need further investigation.

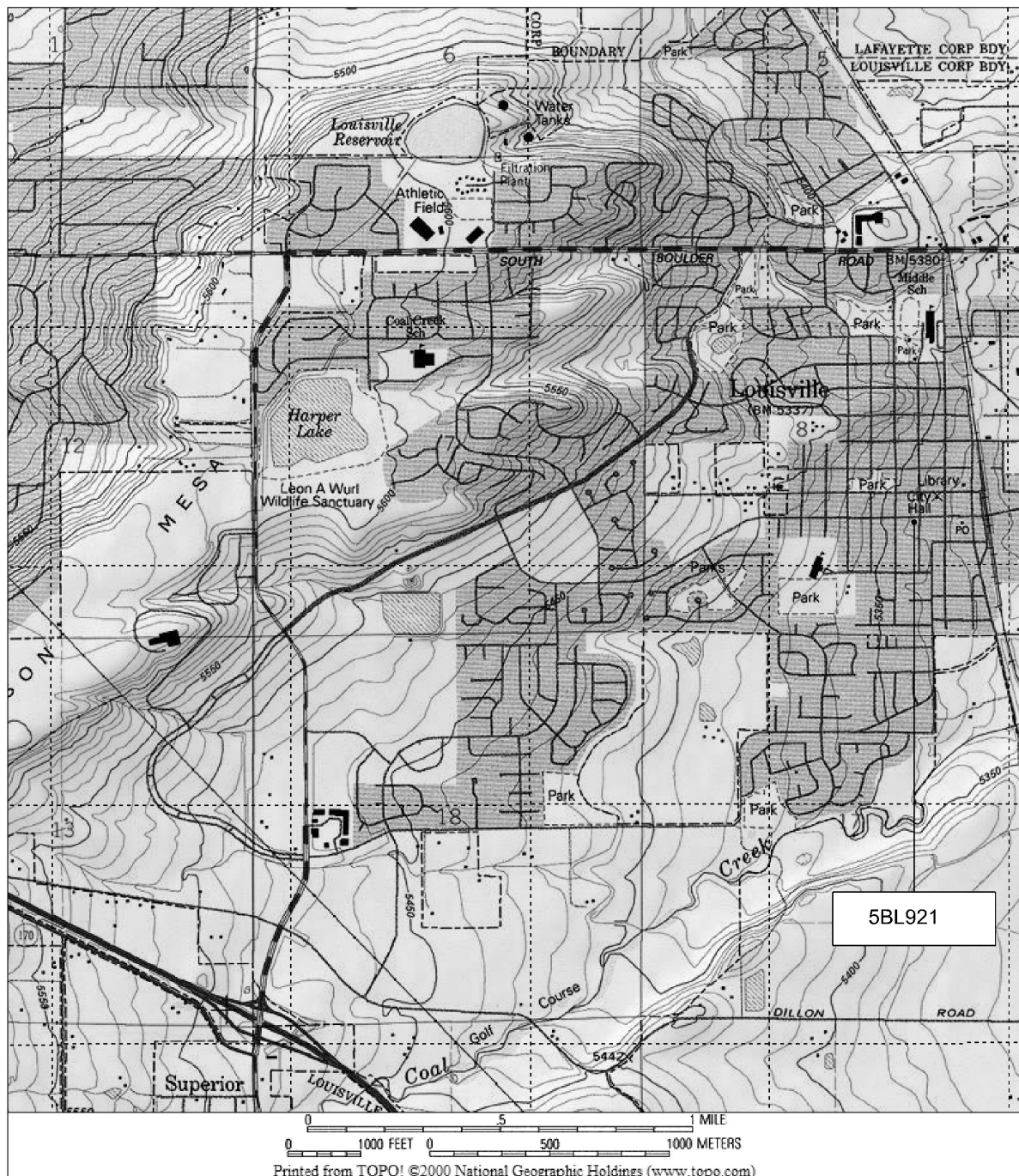
14. Management Recommendations: The property is worthy of individual nomination to the State Register as well as nomination as a Louisville Local Landmark.
15. Photograph Types and Numbers: 5BL921_01 through 5BL921_05
16. Artifact and Field Documentation Storage Location: Electronic files of forms with embedded photos and maps at Colorado Historical Society. Electronic files of forms, and electronic files of photographs at City of Louisville, Colorado, Planning Department.
17. Report Title: Historical and Architectural Survey of Jefferson Place Subdivision, Louisville, Colorado
18. Recorder(s): Kathy and Leonard Lingo, and Bridget Bacon, City of Louisville
19. Date(s): 2013
20. Recorder Affiliation: Avenue L Architects, 3457 Ringsby Court Suite 317, Denver CO 80216 (303) 290-9930

Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
1200 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203
303-866-3395

Resource Number: 5BL921
Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012

Resource Number: 5BL921

Architectural Inventory Form
USGS Location Map



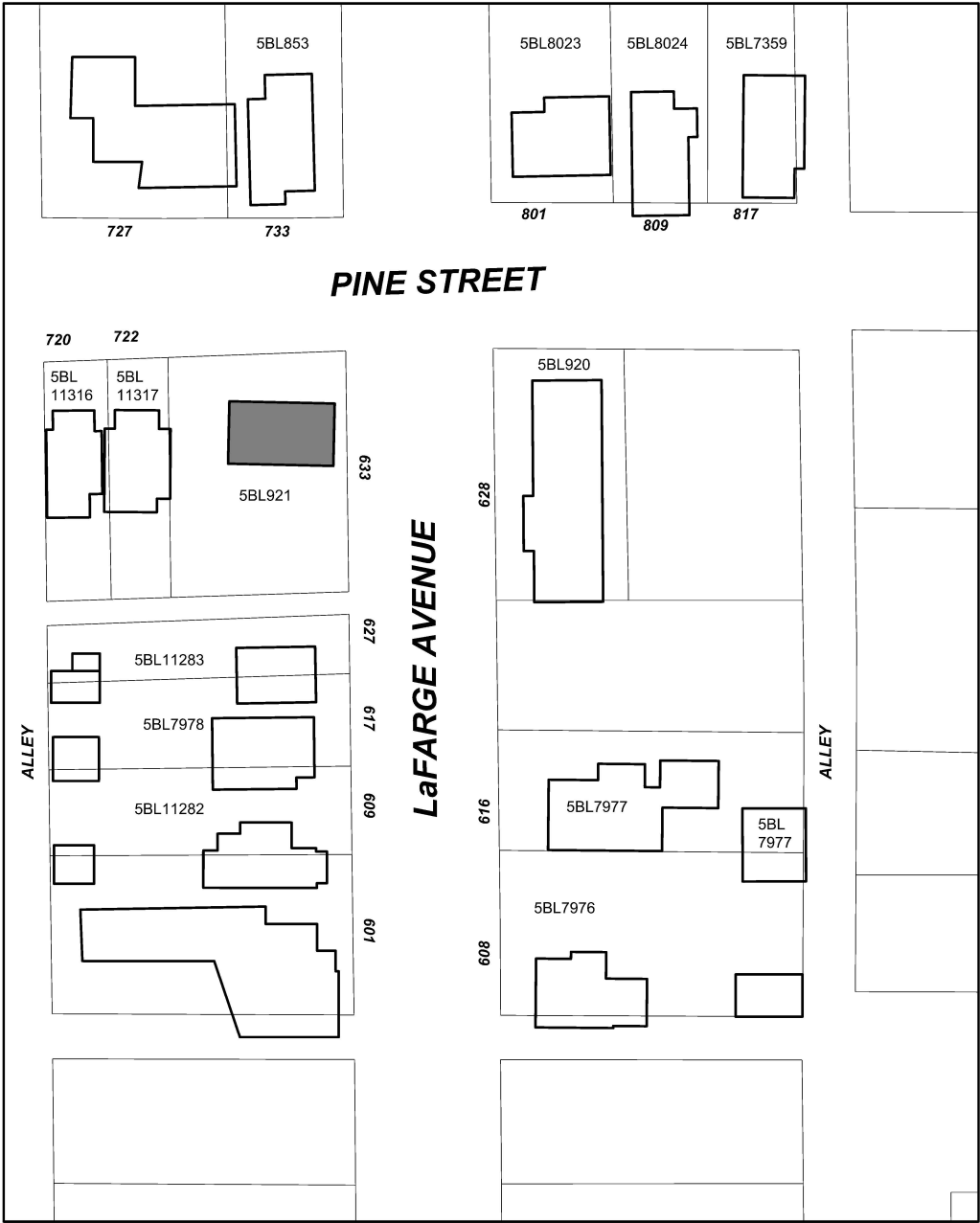
633 LaFarge Avenue, Louisville, Colorado

SOURCE: Extract of Louisville, Colorado
USGS map, 1994.



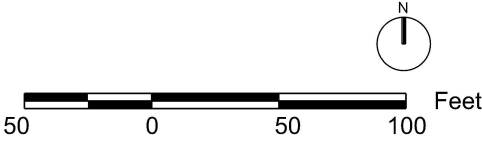
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Architectural Inventory Form
Site Location Map



633 LaFarge Avenue, Louisville, Colorado

SOURCE: City of Louisville, Colorado
GIS Files.



Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012



5BL921_633LaFarge_01 Northeast



5BL921_633LaFarge_02 Southeast

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012



5BL921_633LaFarge_03 North



5BL921_633LaFarge_04 Northwest

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012



5BL921_633LaFarge_05 Northwest with Shed



633LaFarge with Commercial Hotel (no longer extant) on left, May 1913
Louisville Historical Museum photo 90-25-08

Resource Number: 5BL921

Temporary Resource Number: 157508435012



633LaFarge c. 1960s
Louisville Historical Museum photo 2008.008.045



633LaFarge, 1948, Boulder County Appraisal card photo